

Today's Sermon Notes:

Arresting Anxious Activity

Sermon Series: Wrestling With Worry And Arresting Anxiety!

Jul 17. Arresting Anxious Activity (Luke 10:41)

Jul 24. Blessed Are The Worrywarts (Phil 4:6)

Jul 31. The Elevated Gaze (Phil 4:8)

Aug 7. The Gift Of Perspective (2 Cor 4:16)

THE SMALL PRINT

I have suffered anxiety. I am not a psychologist and not qualified to offer treatment or advice to those diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. But I have been through it and I am a registered psychotherapist (which just means in depth counsellor). I present a spiritual perspective. If you are diagnosed, nothing here should be bad for you, and there might be a breakthrough because Jesus has mercy for anxious ones like us. But if in doubt please see a registered psychologist or psychiatrist.

AN AGE OF ANXIETY

"Anxiety blankets our society and our lives like a thick, wet, bone-chilling fog... In late 2019 my research company launched a global study... we found that one of the central aspects of the experience of young adults around the world is anxiety. And that was before the coronavirus pandemic." - David Kinnaman, CEO of Barna Group (Quoted In: A Non-Anxious Presence, Mark Sayers, pg. 2)

Jesus operated in an age of anxiety. Terrible disease, no hospitals, inflation, price gouging, people going broke, lenders hiking interest rates, war, oppression, mayhem, the rich getting richer, ordinary people struggling.

LUKE 10:38-42 - A VIST FROM A NON-ANXIOUS MESSIAH

Jesus visits two friends Mary and Martha. Mary sits at his feet, relaxing, enjoying, discussing. But Martha is anxious, rushing, cleaning, cooking, running. She explodes at Jesus her guest, "Don't you care? Tell her to help me!" Jesus responds...

Luke 10:41

"Martha, Martha, you are anxious and distracted about many things, but one thing is necessary..."

The word is for 'anxious' here is MERIMNAO. It may start as a good kind of care. But it gets out of control. Care can become concern. Concern can become worry. Worry can become anxiety! Martha appears to 'care' but it has become anxiety. She

responds with both of the common responses – flight (she runs around cooking but not talking to her guest) and fight (she yells at HIM!).

NAME IT!

Notice what Jesus does with her anxiety? It's daring, caring, and very helpful.

For a long time I was growing anxious. Surrounded by anxious people. In the spotlight; the crosshairs of criticism. I could feel it inside me. But I never named it. Its power grew and it could not be addressed. I named all the problems and all the things making me anxious. But I didn't admit that the anxiety was a real thing and that it was consuming me. It's OK to admit it. It's part of being human!

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." - Franklin D. Roosevelt

People react to world events with all sorts of strange things rather than just admitting that we are afraid. It's OK to be frightened. Healthy people recognize and admit it.

What is it that Jesus wants to name in your life?

NAME IT AND LET IT BE FOR A MOMENT!

There's an old story about Martin Luther waking to see Satan standing at his bed. He did not curse Satan, or command him to be gone, or yell at him. He did not engage. He just said, "Oh Satan, it's just you!" and went back to sleep. What if you did that with anxiety? What if you named it and just watched it do its thing for a moment?

"Oh anxiety, it's you again. It's OK you're there.

I'll let you do your thing. I'll let you just be for a moment!"

Jesus names Martha's anxiety and asks her to come and sit down. Just let all the jobs be for a moment. Don't try to stop it. Just name it. Let it be. And sit down. Jesus actually gives this advice in other ways. He says... Are you anxious? Look at the birds! Anxious? Watch the flowers grow!

"I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air..." - Matthew 6:25-26

"And why are you anxious about clothes? See the flowers of the field grow..."

- Matthew 6:28

ANXIETY - JESUS IS WITH YOU IN IT

Jesus knows Martha's name. He says it twice (in that culture is a sign of intimacy). He speaks it with love. He is not judging her. He's calling her to join him. He is with her. He wants her with him!

"I am with you always, even to the end of the age." - Matthew 28:20b